



**REPORT ON TRAINING OF LOGGERS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES
ON OFF-RESERVE LOGGING DO'S AND DON'TS**

**SUBMITTED BY:
SFMP-G**

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1.0 Introduction

The Ghana Sustainable Forest Management Partnership Ghana (SFMP-G) is a platform of five organizations that are joined by a vision of sustainable forest management in Ghana. These organizations are the National Working Group on Forest Certification (NWG), Rural Development and Youth Association (RUDEYA), the Kumasi Wood Cluster Association (KWC), Agri-business in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products (ASNAPP), and Friends of the Earth (FoE-Gh). SFMP-Ghana is supported by FAO to implement a project titled “Improving off-reserve logging in support of a functional VPA”. The project has drafted a list of Dos and Don’ts for off-reserve logging which has been validated at a workshop. This list was used to train logging companies and forest fringe community representatives to better contribute in managing timber resources in off-reserve areas. The training was also used to recap the legality definition of off-reserve logging using the operational checklist developed by the FC of Ghana. The training workshop was organised on the 17th February, 2016 at Wedam Hotel, Abuakwa-Maakro in the Nkawie Forest District for thirty (30) participants drawn from six (6) forest districts involving eighteen (18) community representatives, six (6) loggers, two (2) project staff, one (1) project steering committee (SC) and three (3) Forest Services Division (FSD) staff from the Nkawie forest district invited to help in a role play session.

2.0 Training Objective

2.1 Objective

- To train representatives of twenty (20) selected communities, and ten (10) Logging Companies (LCs) on responsible ORL negotiation and implementation and fair compensation calculation.

2.2 Expected outcome

- Twenty (20) selected community representatives, and ten (10) LCs trained on responsible ORL negotiation and implementation and fair compensation calculation.

3.0 Activity Details

3.1 Arrival and Registration of Participants

The workshop commenced at 9:20am with registration of participants and an opening prayer said by Madam Hagar Asuo. A total of thirty (30) participants attended the training. Please refer to Annex 2 for participant’s list.

4.0 Overview of Sessions

4.1. Welcome Address and Training objective by- Mrs. Esi Banful

Mrs. Esi Banful welcomed all the participants and emphasized that the success of the project depended on their full participation. She mentioned that the workshop participants comprised

loggers, farmers, and community members and underscored their importance to the project. In attendance was Mrs. Doreen Asumang-Yeboah, a project steering committee member. Mrs. Banful noted that the objective of the training workshop was for the participants to gain in-depth knowledge and skills to enable them engage in responsible ORL negotiation and implementation and agree on a fair compensation value. She further mentioned that the list of dos and don'ts which is an outcome of the baseline survey will be distributed by the end of the project so that all stakeholders will know their expected roles and responsibilities particularly the communities and the loggers. She ended by urging the participants to feel free and ask questions and express themselves during the sessions.

4.2. Field verification checklist and importance of record keeping: Presentation by Esi Banful

She started her presentation by explaining that Ghana's FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) explicitly recognizes certain rights and the need for social safeguards for communities affected by Off-Reserve Logging (ORL). She buttressed her claim by stating that principles 1 (Sourcing of Timber) and 3 (Timber Harvesting Operations) of the Legality Standard directly refer to and uphold community rights and benefits in the management of ORL.

She reiterated that her presentation focuses on principles 1 and 3 of the legality checklist and took participants through them. She indicated that Principle 1 is about the Sourcing of timber. She stressed that in sourcing for timber it is important to follow the right procedures and the community has a role to play in the identification of the trees and must take part in the pre-felling inspection by the Forest Service Division. She noted that written consents from the affected farmers, landowner and the chief are important. And these should have evidence to prove them. She enumerated the following as required documents that both the community and loggers must keep records of: letter of consent, SRA negotiation and signing, SRA fulfillment document, SRA payment records, compensation negotiation and agreement (pre-logging), compensation determination and payment document (post-logging). The consultation process was stated to be important and that all stakeholders had to get involved and ensure the right documentations from the outset. She emphasized that the documentation must be done at the Community, Loggers and Forestry Commission levels.

Comments from the Presentations.

The following were comments, suggestions and questions raised:

Questions:

- What happens if the farmer refuses to take the proposed rate by the logger? The response was that the compensation had to be re-negotiated. Is it wrong to engage and agree with the entire community on the rate of compensation? It was explained that it is during SRA negotiations that required the engagement and involvement of the entire community members or their representatives.
- Can a farmer sell his/her tree to a logger and take compensation as well?
- Is there a tree tending toll for nurturing a tree at the off-reserve area?
- If farmers can sell their land for mining and gain money why is it that the farmer cannot gain anything from the selling of the tree he/she has tended?
- Sometimes farmers are afraid to sign the letter of consent after the agreement because of its legal implications or out of ignorance. What should be done?
-

General Comments:

- It is important to do the negotiation well and in the presence of the entire community members so that even if there is a change of a chief, the process will not be affected
- The FSD official should facilitate the negotiation process and witness it to allay any fears.
- The negotiation process should start between the farmer and the logger, the FSD staff comes in only where there is disagreement. However, records of the negotiation and agreements should be kept among the farmer, logger and the FSD.
- Some farmers prefer to deal with chain saw operators to the detriment of legally registered loggers because their rates are always better.
- Currently, the proceeds from trees go into development projects through the District assembly and the FC.
- The farmer should not destroy the trees on their farms because there is a policy in the pipeline to address the situation and confer the ownership of trees on farms to the farmers/landowners.
- In situations where there is a faction in the community level, the unit committee and the chief can be the negotiation team for SRA.

4.3 Role Play on ORL in practice.

This session was used for a role play on ORL. Participants were grouped into three and each group took on a role as a community, district forest office and a logging company. There was an enactment of ORL procedures through a role play. The purpose of the role play was to demonstrate how practical ORL negotiation procedures and processes have been among the 3 key actors. After the role play, there was a discussion segment and the participants made the following comments and observations.

Logger comments

- The process of approval of the application is too cumbersome. It should be reduced.
- FSD should use technology to reduce the process of permit application.
- Royalty should be reduced in order to reduce the financial burden of the loggers since TUC holders do not have to negotiate farmers. The permit period should be increased from 6 month to 1 year.

Comments from Community

- It is important to negotiate the rate of compensation with the affected farmers not the entire community and should be done during the application process stage for a letter of consent.
- Whatever rate agreed on should be documented.
- All the affected farmers should be involved in the discussion of the letter of consent.
- SRA education is needed at the community and the logger level. This is because most chiefs still think that the SRA is for them and not for the entire community.
- SRA agreement should be time bound so that loggers could be evaluated on the dates provided.
- The farmer/community should be involved in the field inspection. Normally, it is the

unit committee members or the assemblyman who take part in the field inspection.

- If the logger stays longer than the period of his operation what can the community do? Community representatives must report it to FSD for the reasons.
- Thinks permits should be given for a year instead of the 6 months
- Sometimes their machines breakdown and go to FSD for extension.

FSD comments

- After the letter of consent, if the farmer allows or sells the tree to a chainsaw operator, what should be done?
- In situations when before the field operations, some of the trees allotted the logger are stolen, who should be held responsible for the illegally harvested trees?
- It was answered by the district forest staff that, it is the responsibility of the community/farmers to protect the trees together with the logger.
- The logger has the right to enforce the law by taken the farmer to the police. However, for the continuation of the work it is important for the logger to allow FSD to enforce the law on his/her behalf.
- Logger should know the best way of engaging the communities.
- Farmers/community should fish out accurate information on the trees allotted to the loggers from FSD.
- The Nkawie District manager commented that, Valuation board cannot be found everywhere in the country but the law allow for negotiation. It is important that negotiation is done, rate is agreed on and all is documented and FC official witness it.

5.0 Presentation on ORL Dos and Don'ts for Loggers and Communities by Doreen Asuman- Yeboah.

Mrs. Asumang-Yeboah accepted to do the presentation on behalf of Elvis Kuudaar, the national consultant of the project, in the Asante dialect for ease of understanding and assimilation by all participants. In her presentation, she defined Off-Reserve Logging (ORL) as logging activities and operations outside the statutory forest reserves. She added that the Off-reserve areas are mainly community lands and that ORL affects community livelihood systems, their social life and settlements. In this wise, she indicated that the ORL is regulated by the FC and the laws provide for the protection of community rights.

In a presentation on Legal ORL, she noted that, ORL was only legal if there was proof that a logger has logged from a legal source and has the required legal permit to log, a proof of the written consent from the rightful landowner(s), proof of a signed SRA, that represents at least a value of 5% of the stumpage fee payable, proof of an agreed SRA implementation plan, and proof of compensation payment to affected farmers in the event of crop damage.

She identified various categories of ORL stakeholders as: community level stakeholders who are farmers, women, men, youth, traditional authorities and opinion leaders. The Government stakeholders were mentioned to be policy makers, policy implementers, regulators and local government. The FC and its divisions, District Assemblies, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Private Sector stakeholders include the wood and non-timber forest product (NTFP) industry along the wood chain which mainly consist of loggers, primary, secondary and tertiary wood processors and retailers. The last group of

stakeholders was given Research and Academia to be Universities and Research institutions in the forestry sector such as FORIG (Forest Research Institute Ghana) and KNUST (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology).

The focus of her presentation was the role of loggers and Communities on ORL. These ORL Dos and Don'ts for Loggers and communities were generated as an outcome of the baseline study in the six forest districts of Ghana. She started by taking the participants through the ORL Dos and Don'ts for Loggers and ended with the ORL Dos and Don'ts for communities. The entire list of ORL Dos and Don'ts for Loggers and communities can be found at the annex 3.2. She concluded by stating that under the VPA, everything was about proof of legality and emphasized that documentation was the best form of proof. She stressed that in the VPA operations, proper documentation is required and encourage law enforcement.

6.0 Conclusion

The training workshop for loggers and communities on the ORL Do and Don'ts ended with prayer at exactly 2:10pm. On behalf of SFMP-G, Mrs. Esi Banful thanked all the participants for their presence and active involvement throughout the training. She reiterated the need for all the participants to bring their knowledge and skills acquired from the training into bare whenever the need arises. It is important that participants share the information from the workshop to other members in their respective communities and with colleague loggers.

She emphasized that the project will share the Dos and Don'ts booklet at the close-out workshop.

Annex 1. Agenda

Training for Loggers and Community Representatives on Off-Reserve Logging Do's And Don'ts

17th February, 2016

Wedam Hotel, Abuakwa - Maakro (Nkawie Forest District)

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
9:00 – 9:15am	Registration	Henrietta Ofosuhene
9:15 – 9:20am	Welcome and training objective	Esi Banful
9:20 – 10:10am	Field verification checklist and importance of record Keeping	Esi Banful
10:10 – 10:30am	Snack Break	Henrietta Ofosuhene
10:30 – 11:30am	Role play (ORL in Practice)	Participants /Betty Boante Abeyie
11:30 – 12:00pm	Observations/Discussion on the role play	Betty Boante Abeyie
12:00 – 12:45pm	ORL do's and don'ts – Loggers and communities	Elvis Kuudaar

12:45 – 1:00pm	Evaluation Exercise (using the H-Diagram)	Betty Boante Abeyie
1:00pm	Closing remarks	Esi Banful

Role Play Scenario

Participants will form 3 groups representing:

1. Logger or representatives to process permits , negotiate SRA with communities and negotiate and agree on compensation with farmers
2. FSD (Chief Executive, DM, ADM, RS) receiving application from
3. Community (chief, odikro, unit committee members, farmer) to negotiate SRA and compensation

Annex 2. Participants List

Scanned and attached to this training workshop report.

Annex 3. Presentations

Presentations by Mrs. Esi Banful and Mrs. Doreen Asumeng Yeboah are attached to this report